

Text: President Clinton Statement on No Gun Ri January 11, 2001

11 January 2001

(U.S. regrets loss of civilian lives in July 1950 incident) (450)

President Clinton expressed U.S. regret for Koreans who lost their lives at No Gun Ri in late July 1950 in a statement issued January 11.

Although the precise events were not completely determined, the U.S. and South Korean governments have concluded in the Statement of Mutual Understanding that "an unconfirmed number of innocent Korean refugees were killed or injured there," the President said. Clinton said that the United States will construct a memorial and establish a commemorative scholarship fund as "a living tribute" to the memory of those who died.

Following is the White House text of Clinton's statement:

(begin text)

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Dover, New Hampshire)
January 11, 2001

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the United States of America, I deeply regret that Korean civilians lost their lives at No Gun Ri in late July, 1950. The intensive, yearlong investigation into this incident has served as a painful reminder of the tragedies of war and the scars they leave behind on people and on nations.

Although we have been unable to determine precisely the events that occurred at No Gun Ri, the U.S. and South Korean governments have concluded in the Statement of Mutual Understanding that an unconfirmed number of innocent Korean refugees were killed or injured there. To those Koreans who lost loved ones at No Gun Ri, I offer my condolences. Many Americans have experienced the anguish of innocent casualties of war. We understand and sympathize with the sense of loss and sorrow that remains even after a half a century has passed. I sincerely hope that the memorial the United States will construct to these and all other innocent Korean civilians killed during the war will bring a measure of solace and closure. The commemorative scholarship fund that we will launch will serve as a living tribute to their memory.

As we honor those civilians who fell victim to this conflict, let us not forget that pain is not the only legacy of the Korean War. American and Korean veterans fought shoulder to shoulder in the harshest of conditions for the cause of freedom, and they prevailed. The vibrancy of democracy in the Republic of Korea, the strong alliance between our two countries, and the closeness of our two peoples today is a testament to the sacrifices made by both of our nations fifty years ago.

(end text)